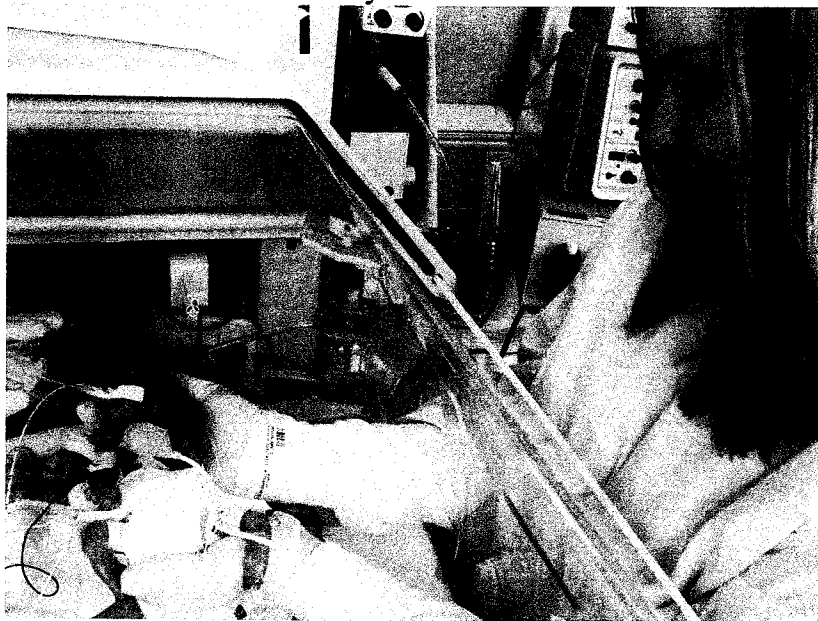


Amy Skryja, Havre, MT Testimony Supporting Personhood Amendment

Unborn children are people and deserve the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They are aware of their surroundings and express feelings and interests in the world outside their womb. They respond to their mothers' voice, music, and mothers' activity at all stages of their lives.

From my own personal experience I witnessed my son's own awareness and interest in his outside world. My son, Holden was born at 25 weeks gestation; an entire 4 months before a normal term delivery.



At an age when most babies remain within their mother for another 4 months during the first moments of his birth, he cried out. In the following hours, he responded to his fathers touch and grasped Daddy's finger with his own tiny hand.



From my womb to a tiny incubator, Holden never lost his ability to recognize his parents' voices. Here he turns his head to our voices and stirs with excitement waving his arms and kicking his legs.



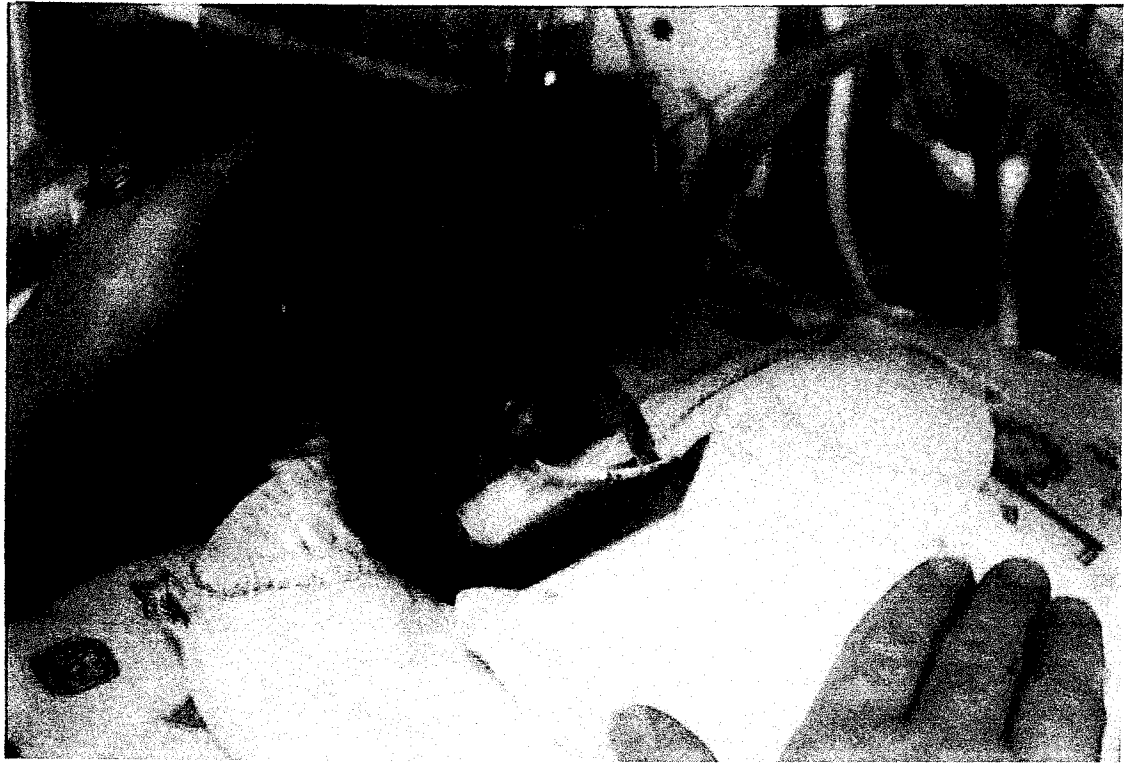
During our visits with Holden, we learned and observed his strong will. He would pull off his mask for breathing as he became uncomfortable and upset.



Nurses who cared for Holden on a regular weekly basis told of Holden's antics. Disgruntled with the noise of shift change Holden would demand close attention. Unhappy and uncomfortable, Holden would simply grab hold of vital medical equipment like leads and oxygen tubes then pull them off.

As the weeks of our stay at the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) stretched into months, my husband and I made a ritual of reading stories to Holden. We read one story

quite often. A storybook entitled Cowboy Dan which soon became Holdie's favorite. When my husband and I were gone overnight, a nurse read Cowboy Dan to a very fussy Holden.



As the nurse accounted to us on our return, "Holden heard his story and settled down immediately". We were shocked. Our little boy was only 2 months old. Phenomenal for a child that wasn't supposed to be born for another 2 whole months!

Every moment in the NICU for 4 months from his first cries after birth to responding to his story, Holden was and is an individual and wanted every opportunity to live life. Holden's development and our experience prove these facts irrefutably. At every stage, everyone deserves every right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.